

Isle of Man Marks Epic Battle Millennium



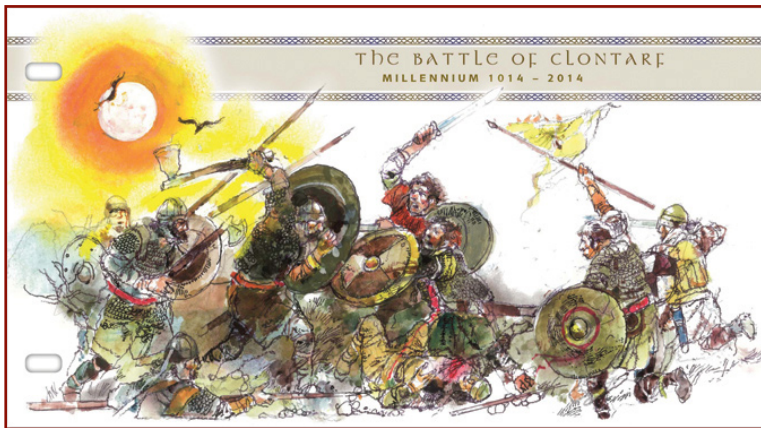
On April 15 Isle of Man Stamps and Coins marked the millennium anniversary of the Battle of Clontarf with a set of six stamps, shown here along with the cover of the Presentation Pack.

On Good Friday, April 23, 1014, the forces of high king of Ireland Brian Boru met the Norse controllers of the powerful trading port of Dublin, who had ambitions of extending their influence to the rest of the country. The fierce fighting just outside Dublin left thousands dead, including Brian. The Battle marked a turning point in the history of Ireland, stemming the power of the Norse and Danes.

This commemorative set brings to life the historic events through the dynamic paintings of Victor Ambrus and text from Dr. Howie Firth, one thousand years after the great battle.

In the text that accompanies the issue, Dr. Firth provides a short but detailed narrative account of the dramatic events leading up to the demise of King Brian Boru and the conquest of his armies and territories in Munster. His narrative also includes quotes and insights from expert chroniclers of the period and their accounts refer to King Brian Boru as a hero figure that brought years of peace, stability, commerce and learning to 11th century Ireland.

The stamps use six different renderings that are representative of war. The images created using watercolor and ink capture the stark brutality and ferocity of war and the color is applied in a bold, brash man-



ner. The images show various scenes from the battle as well as individual profiles including participants in the Battle.

Commenting on the stamps Dr. Firth said. "It's tremendous that the Isle of Man Post Office is marking the 1000th anniversary of an event that has resonated through the centuries in stories and sagas. The battle affected the lives of so many people and communities, from Ireland and Man to Orkney and Iceland. The sea

route from Norway down through the Irish Sea and on the Mediterranean was one of the great trading highways of Europe at the time, and the Isle of Man was part of the complex mix of commerce and politics....It's good to think of the shared appreciation in art and story bringing people together to remember those who lived and died at Clontarf."

Commenting on the designs, Maxine Cannon, General Manager, Isle of Man Stamps and Coins said, "Victor Ambrus has produced some amazing images...These stamps pay a great tribute to the memory of the battle and king Brian Boru. We are very pleased to be able to offer our collectors such an important piece of history."

The Battle of Clontarf issue is available in complete sets of the six stamps, either in mint condition or Cancelled to Order, as well as in sheets of 15 stamps, with free worldwide delivery. For information on this and other Isle of Man new issues and a link to the Isle of Man postal administration website, please go to

<http://www.stampnewsnow.com/IsleOfManNewIssues.html>.